

SECRET

From: [] Report No: RLB-2094 Local File No: []
No. of Pages: Seven No. of Enclosures: None
Report Made By: [] Approved By: []
Distribution:
By copy to: Washington (3) Orally to: No-one
(1)
(2) Subject: Two More Letters from GHURI
to the Grand Mufti
Source Cryptonym: [] References: See report
Source, Operational Data, and Comments:

MICROFILMED
DEC 8 1960
DOCUMENT-MICROFILM SERVICE

These letters were acquired in circumstances
similar to those described on the cover sheet
of RLB-2078.

MICROFILMED
FEB 21 1963
DOC. MICRO. SER.

DECLASSIFIED AND RELEASED BY
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
SOURCE METHOD EXEMPTION 3828
NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT
DATE 2008

INDEX

1D COPY

Classification

SECRET CONTROL U.S. EMBASSY

SECRET - CONTROL

Subject : Two More Letters from GHURI to the Grand Mufti
 Place : Beirut, Lebanon
 Evaluation: Documentary
 Source : ☐ ☐

Report Number : RLB-2094
 Date of Information : Current
 Date Acquired : As Indicated
 Date of Report: 20 Aug 1950

Source states that:

1. The following are translations from the original Arabic of two letters from ~~Abd~~ GHURI, Arab Higher Committee leader in Beirut, to the Grand Mufti in Cairo:

July 31, 1950

7a. "King 'ABDULLAH has for more than a month been bringing pressure to bear on his government to enter into negotiations with the Jews for the conclusion of peace. The government has tried to avoid this pressure because of Palestinian public opinion. This has angered the King, who has decided to work alone. In speeding up this matter he has been moved by the Korean war, by his belief that such action will bring him material benefits, and by the news of the coming of the Conciliation Commission to Jerusalem.

7b. "The King delegated 'Abd-al-Ghani al-KARAMAH, Acting leader of the Diwan, to undertake the negotiations with the Jews. Al-KARAMAH contacted them in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem several times and learned from them that they want peace on the basis of the existing frontiers. With regard to the subject of the refugees, the Jews expressed readiness to compensate them.

7c. "In view of the importance of the refugee question -- particularly regarding the refugees themselves -- al-KARAMAH agreed with Moshe SHARETT that SHARETT issue a statement promising the payment of compensation for the properties of the Arabs. This statement was issued during the Id al-Fitr, as you remember, and the Arab newspapers published it. It was the first statement on the part of the Jews promising to compensate the Arabs for their properties. It was broadcast by the Ramallah radio station.

SECRET - CONTROL - U.S. OFFICE - JMW

SECRET

- 2 -

RLB-2094
20 August 1950

- (d). "Undoubtedly SHARETT's statement was rather well received by many of those who had begun to believe that the Jews would never return them to their country or compensate them for their properties. It may be said that this statement revived some of the refugees' hopes. The King took advantage of this new mood of the refugees and proceeded to contact a number of Palestinians to persuade them of the necessity of concluding a peace with the Jews, pointing out the benefits to them and to their country which would accrue from it. The newspaper Palestine, in its editorials, began to call for the conclusion of peace and emergence from the present state. The King depended in his efforts and propaganda on Jamal TUQAN and Ahmad al-HALIL and officials like them. He also particularly depended on Muhammad 'Ali al-JABIRI and Wadih DA'MIS, in addition to his dependence on his Jordanian followers. The King contacted Sulayman TUQAN with a view to urging him to spread propaganda for peace. But Sulayman, who had received letters threatening him with death, excused himself on a pretext of bad health and left for Lebanon, where he spent ten days (during which time efforts for peace ended).
- (e). "The King's propagandists proceeded to urge the people for the conclusion of peace and to prepare the ground for it. The King invited to his palace many Palestinian senators, deputies, and other leaders, and hinted to them about the question of peace. He regarded their silence in his presence as indicating acceptance of the idea of concluding peace.
- (f). "However, as soon as reports began to circulate among the people that the King was intending to make peace, feelings ran high. A local demonstration was held in Nablus, the demonstrators shouting slogans against peace and against the King. The King arrested many of the demonstrators and tortured them.
- (g). "Wadih DA'MIS called for the holding of meetings in Beit Jala, Jerusalem, and Bethlehem, for discussing peace, but the people stayed away from them.
- (h). "On 21 July 1950 a special meeting was held in Beit Jala which was attended by Wadih DA'MIS; 'Abd-al-Fattah DARWISH; Muhammad 'Ali al-JABIRI; Tawfiq Bey KATTAN, the Deputy; the chief of the municipality of Beit Sahur, and a number

(2) SECRET

of notables from the Hebron District. 'Isa al-BANDAK did not attend this meeting because he was in disagreement with DA'MIS (due to the fact that DA'MIS is competing with him in gaining the King's favor and in serving the imperialists; in fact, DA'MIS is today closer to the King than is BANDAK). During this meeting the majority of those present rejected the idea of peace with the Jews. Strangely enough, 'Abd-al-Pattah DARWISH was the strongest opponent of the project. He strongly disagreed with DA'MIS. Only DA'MIS and al-JABIRI openly supported the project. When DA'MIS found that he had failed, he suggested the holding of a big meeting on the following day, but it was not held.

241. "The King was depending on Anwar al-KHATIB and his Municipal Council. When he sent Jamal TUQAN to them to urge them to take an interest in the subject of peace, and to accept the measures in accordance with the proposed terms, al-KHATIB refused and frankly proclaimed his stand against the conclusion of peace. The King grew angry and dismissed al-KHATIB from his office, appointing Arif al-ARIF in his place. When the members of the Municipal Council saw this, they all resigned except Hanna ATALLAH, the Deputy Chief. (This Hanna ATALLAH is a lawyer and brother of Antun ATALLAH the lawyer, and is not Dr. Hanna ATALLAH, as might be supposed).

242. "In view of the King's insistence on concluding peace and his pressure on Sa'id al-MUFTI and the Government toward that end, Sa'id al-MUFTI made the statement that those whose views should be sought first on the subject are the people of Palestine. If they should indicate that they would accept peace, then the Government would proceed with the negotiations. On this basis Sa'id al-MUFTI, al-SHARIQI, and al-SHANQITI toured Palestine and held many meetings in Nablus, Jenin, Tulkarm, Jerusalem, Bethlehem, and Hebron and consulted with the leaders, the notables, and the youths on the subject of the proposed peace. All the latter proclaimed their refusal and emphasized their adherence to their rights -- particularly those who represented the refugees. They unanimously rejected any such peace, stating that they would accept only such peace as would be based on the Partition Resolution and compensation for the refugees.

(3)
SECRET

SECRET

- 4 -

MB-2094
20 August 1950

8k1. "On 24 July a meeting was held in Jerusalem that was attended by the Prime Minister, senators, deputies, other officials, a large number of refugee leaders, and the Municipal Council (before the dismissal of Anwar al-KHATIB). This meeting was quite boisterous. DA'MIS and al-JABIRI were most enthusiastic for peace, so much so that al-JABIRI mentioned the annexation and said, 'We, the people of Palestine, must kiss the feet of the Jordanians and put them on our heads, because they accepted our annexation to them.' Then a dispute developed -- and this is strange -- between him and 'Abd-al-Fattah DARWISH, who insisted on rejecting peace except on the basis of the Partition at least. The rest of the conferees strongly objected to the idea of peace. This attitude caused DA'MIS to address the conferees in the following manner: 'You are talking just as used to talk the leaders of the past thirty years who have lost our country for us.' He was answered severely by a number of the conferees, including the chief of the municipality of Beit Sahur and 'Abd-al-Fattah DARWISH, who said, 'We wish we had listened to them and followed their policy.' DA'MIS then cried out, 'Listen to what these people are saying! By God, this meeting is just like the meetings the leaders of the Arab Higher Committee used to hold, when 'amil GHURI, the -----, spoke.' The clamor then increased and some of the men from Jerusalem answered him very strongly. Sa'id al-MUFTI was then obliged to request them to behave reasonably and soberly, and not to attack each other with bad words. DA'MIS then said, 'Let them proclaim Hajj Amin King. This, it seems, is the desire of the conferees.' The meeting then ended upon the request of Sa'id al-MUFTI.

417. "When the ministerial mission concluded its tour of Palestine it returned to 'Amman and the Government decided not to accept the idea of concluding peace. It submitted a report to this effect to the King, who became angry and called them cowards who were afraid for their lives on account of the gangsters of the Grand Mufti Hajj Amin. It is reported that the King will dismiss the Cabinet."

4 1 p a c e

{10 August 1950}

a.
209. "The Arab Bank in 'Amman used to receive from London payments to former Palestinian employees (awards, compensations, and retirement money) in sterling currency. It paid this money out in Palestinian currency, thereby benefiting from the difference in the currencies. It is estimated that the amount which the bank gained in this way has to date amounted to 150,000 guineas.

3 4 E CONTINUED

RLB-2094
20 August 1950

24. "The party concerned learned of this matter and proceeded to warn and threaten to take measures, etc. SHUMAN was therefore obliged to pay fifty thousand guineas to the exalted authority -- as the price of silence and disregard.
25. "The UNRWA has adopted a secret resolution offering five million dollars in three payments (2-2-1) to Musa al-'ALAMI for undertaking his development project. It is awaiting the special approval of Trygve LIE. There are others who assert that not all of this sum will be from the agency, but from other Anglo-American-Jewish quarters which will secretly participate in paying the sum.
26. "The weekly review al-Hadaf, which appears in Jerusalem, is edited by Burhan al-DAJANI, son of Shaykh Ahmad Raghib Abu-al-Sa'ud al-DAJANI. It is the mouthpiece of the 'Bathayin' who today regard Anwar al-KHATIB as their leader -- especially since the development of the known differences (personal or family) between him and Musa al-'ALAMI. Al-Hadaf is waging a campaign against al-'ALAMI and is demanding statements on the funds of the Arab Bureaus and the development projects.
27. "Isa al-KHALILI is today imprisoned in Damascus. It is said that he will remain in his aunt's house until further notice. It has been proved to the Surete Generale that he is connected with the arrangement which has been made in Syria for honoring Ust Subhi ABU GHANIMAH, GHURI, Rafiq al-TAMIMI, and 'Abdullah al-TAL. Indeed, he is one of the makers of the arrangement. His colleague, 'Abd-al-Karim BURIMAH arrived, but he was expelled from Syria and returned to Jordan. The whereabouts of the third, Muhammad (Shaykh) BURAHIM, is still unknown.
28. "There are indications that Nazmi al-'ANBATAWI is one of the leaders who participated in the arrangement; we shall see.
29. "The total number of the foreign staff of the UNRWA is 125. Sixty-three percent of them are British and hold the principal positions. More than half of these are either present or former members of the well-known Intelligence Service. One is in charge of the Agency's administration in the Dara District; the second is in charge of the administration in Qameshli; the third in Aleppo; the fourth purchases wheat for the Agency....

SECRET

SECRET

- 6 -

RLB-2094
20 August 1950

Itf. "There are many sons of the Thames who fill Beirut and Damascus with their commercial activities. They have opened business offices in the two capitals. They are very humble and for this reason always meet with the young men and newspapermen and others in clubs, salons, cinemas, etc. All the undertakings and contracts of the UN Agency are given for considerations appreciated by the gentlemen. The approval or advice of the Ministry of Colonies is always asked for in a secret manner on matters of policy and orientation."

~~(12 August 1950)~~

Field Notes (by paragraph):

- (c). Moshe SHARETT, Israeli Foreign Minister, has been reported in RLB-1409.
- (d). We find no trace on Jamal TUQAN. For Ahmad al-KHALIL, see RLB-2046, RLB-2065, etc. Muhammad 'Ali al-JABIRI has been reported in RLB-2065. Wadih DA'MIS, Jordan senator, has been reported in RLB's-1953 and 2065. Sulayman Bey TUQAN, Jordan senator, has been reported in RLB's-1953, 2046, and 2065.
- (h). 'Abd-al-Pattah DARWISH has been reported in RLB's-1775, 1953, and 2065. Tawfiq Bey KATTAN has been reported in RLB-1953. We find no trace on 'Isa al-BANDAK.
- (i). For Anwar al-KHATIB, see RLB-2065. ARIF may be the Arif Pasha ARIF of RSD-440. We find no trace on Hanna ATALLAH, but Dr. Hanna ATALLAH appears as a "spy" on the Bethlehem police list reported in RLB-1907.
- (j). Sa'id Pasha al-MUFTI, Jordanian Prime Minister, has been reported in RLB's-1953 and 2064. We cannot identify al-SHARIQI or al-SHANQITI.
- (k). For Emil GHURI, see RLB's-2043, 2091, etc.
- (n). We cannot identify SHUMAN (fnu). The "exalted authority" here seems to be King 'ABDALLAH.
- (o). For Musa al-'ALAMI, see RPJ-241 and RLB's-1789 and 2065.

(3)
SECRET

SECRETS CONTROL - U.S. DEPT. OF STATE

- 7 -

RLB-2094 -
20 August 1950

- (p). We find no trace on Burhan al-DAJANI or his father.
- (q). 'Isa al-KHALILI has been reported in RLB's-2063, 2064, etc. By "honoring" GHURI evidently means "assassinating." Dr. ABU-GHANIMAH has been reported in RLB's-1959, 2010, etc. For Rafiq Bey al-TAMIMI, see RLB-2063 and RSD's-354, 489, and 494. Col. 'Abdallah al-TALL has been reported in RLB's-2010, 2011, etc. Muhammad Shaykh IBRAHIM has been reported in RLB's-1522 and 1792.
- (r). For Nazmi al-ANBATAWI, see RLB-2065.

(3) SECRETS CONTROL - U.S. DEPT. OF STATE